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## **JESUS' GENEALOGIES**

Christmas season is a good time to look at some of the fascinating things about Jesus' birth starting with his genealogies:

- Matthew and Luke are the two Gospels that report on Jesus' genealogy, birth, and early years. Mark and John start with Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Actually, the Gospel of John starts with Jesus' pre-existence in heaven where he existed with God the Father from eternity past. *In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God.* (Matt. 1:1-2 NLT)
- The genealogy of Matthew starts with Abraham (about 2000 BC) and progresses through King David (about 1000 BC) and down through Joseph, who is called "*the husband of Mary*" (Matt. 1:16). Joseph is listed, presumably, because he was the legal father of Jesus. Matthew's genealogy follows the line of David's son Solomon.
- The genealogy of Luke (Luke 3:21-38) reverses the order and starts with Jesus and goes up the line of ancestors all the way to Adam. This is consistent with Luke's emphasis (in the Gospel of Luke and in the book of Acts) on Jesus as the Savior of all people everywhere. (Hallelujah!) Luke's genealogy follows the line of Nathan, another of David's sons. One possible explanation for the difference in some of the names is that Matthew records Joseph's genealogy while Luke records Mary's.
- Genealogies were important in Judaism because land rights were passed down through the generations, and certain offices, such as priest and king, were inherited from father to son. Matthew was addressed primarily to the Jews and his genealogy proves that Jesus was a descendant of David and Abraham and thus a legitimate heir to the throne of David and also eligible to be the "Messiah" that was prophesied.
- An interesting fact: these genealogies were representative rather than an unbroken list of every individual. That is to say, when the genealogy says, "blank, the son of blank," it can mean "blank, the ancestor of blank." Thus, in Matthew's list, Jehoram, Josiah and Shealtiel were the grandfathers rather than the fathers of the next man listed.
- Four women are listed in the genealogy: one, Ruth, was a Gentile and a very faithful lady; one, Rahab, was a Gentile and had been a prostitute; one, Tamar, pretended to be a prostitute; and one, Bathsheba, committed adultery with King David and was the mother of Solomon.
- Why the emphasis on genealogies in the Bible? Possibly so that God might tell us that every soul is important and is written down in his books. Possibly to show us that God works in and through fallen, sinful people. Possibly to remind us that God is a generational God, the alpha and the omega.
- The following verse concludes the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew. Matt. 1:17 – *So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations* (Speaks of God's revelation breaking through to man, and speaks of God's promises bringing hope to man), *from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations* (Speaks of man's sin, loss of hope, and bondage), *and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations* (Speaks of hope restored through the mighty act of God in bringing forth the Messiah, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ).

## **A PROPHEMIC DREAM?**

I usually record in the margins of my Bibles or in a notebook the impressions, dreams, visions, that I think may be communications from God. Later I can look back at these notes and try to figure out if that was really God or my imagination. During the Christmas season in 2015, I recorded the following:

"In a dream I saw myself among a great multitude of people, like one of those scenes of a mob of people in New York

or some other huge city. The scene appeared as if it were set on a huge stage with artificial scenery. Then the play came to an end and the streets, buildings, cars, and even the sky all dissolved, leaving only a huge multitude of souls standing on a level plain. I sensed that we were all waiting to be judged by God.”

Was this dream a message from God? I believe it was because it lines up so clearly with Biblical passages about the end:

- Revelation 6:13-14 – *Then the stars of the sky fell to the earth like green figs falling from a tree shaken by a strong wind. The sky was rolled up like a scroll, and all of the mountains and islands were moved from their places.*
- Isaiah 34:4 – *The heavens above will melt away and disappear like a rolled-up scroll. The stars will fall from the sky like withered leaves from a grapevine, or shriveled figs from a fig tree.*
- Mark 13:24-27 – *At that time, after the anguish of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great power and glory. And he will send out his angels to gather his chosen ones from all over the world – from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.*
- 2 Peter 3:8-13 - *(The Lord) does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything in it will be found to deserve judgment....But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised.*

God said in his Word, the Bible, that *Temporal things, things seen, will soon pass away, but the things we cannot see will last forever.* (2 Cor. 4:18) Even science agrees that the earth and sun are temporary and will soon be gone. Well, not exactly soon, but a few billion years don't seem very long to a guy my age. The question is whether the rest of that verse is true: *but the things we cannot see will last forever.*

The Bible discloses that the world, our bodies, and all of nature were prepared by the Creator as the setting for a cosmic test: Will creatures who are made in the image of God and who are given free will choose to love and serve God, or will they choose to love and serve only themselves?

You and I are participants in this test. How's it going?

## **THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS**

The 700 Club, Pat Robertson's ministry on TV, recently featured the story of a young man who was stricken with cancer at the age of 20. The physicians wanted him to follow the usual course of chemo-therapy, but as he studied about it and learned about the terrible side-effects of chemo-therapy, he determined to look for another path to healing. He pointed out that the cost of treating the average cancer patient is \$300,000 – including cost of physicians, pharmaceuticals, and hospital. He said that doctors are not trained or encouraged to learn about nutrition or alternatives to chemo-therapy, radiation-therapy, and surgery. This is not to impugn the integrity of physicians, but the huge financial incentive to follow the standard Western model of medicine surely disinclines them to consider or recommend other options.

The course that the young man followed and which led to his eventual healing involved nutrition, exercise, and forgiveness. You can find his information about nutrition on the 700 Club website, but his insights into forgiveness reinforced what I have learned from many sources and from my own ministry over the past 45 years. Again and again I have seen people healed emotionally and physically when we led them to forgive. This young man said that he was raised in a good home where there was no verbal or physical abuse or abandonment, so he did not have any extreme situations in his history. Nevertheless, he was emotionally wounded in many subtle ways in the course of growing up in a broken world, and God led him to focus on every relationship and listen to the Holy Spirit in order to discover forgotten wounds that had resulted in his having unforgiveness hidden in his heart.

David prayed in Psalm 19:12 (NLT)– *How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults.*

David prays again in Psalm 139:23-24 (NKJV) - *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

David was acknowledging that he did not really know his own heart.....nor do you or I! The heart is like an iceberg where only 7% of it is above the surface where it is accessible to our consciousness. Example: One time I was ministering

to a young man and learned that he had never known his natural father who had impregnated and then abandoned his mother. I asked him if he had ever forgiven his father, and he said, "I don't need to forgive him. I've never known him or thought much about him, so I don't have any resentment." I told him that to cover all the bases I would like to lead him in a prayer of forgiveness. He allowed me to do that, and as he said the words tears started running down his face. He said, "Maybe I needed to forgive him after all."

## **FORGIVENESS IS COMMANDED BY THE LORD!**

Do you realize that forgiveness is not peripheral but central to the Christian life? Do you realize that forgiveness is not just a recommendation for followers of Christ but is in fact a commandment? Do you realize that forgiveness is emphasized in the Lord's Prayer, in the Sermon on the Mount, and in Jesus' teachings? And do you remember that Jesus' life epitomized forgiveness and that his prayer even as he hung on the cross was that his Father forgive those who were crucifying him? Consider some of Jesus' teachings:

- Matt. 6:12 (NLT) (the Lord's Prayer): *and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us ..*
- Matt. 6:14-15 (NLT) *If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.*
- Mark 11:25-26 (NLT) *But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.*
- Luke 6:37 (NLT) *Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.*

## **FIVE STEPS OF FORGIVENESS**

Since forgiveness is central in the ministry of Jesus and central to our lives as Christians, I always begin my seminars with a teaching on this subject. Please consider the following steps of forgiveness

### **1. Be Honest About Who Hurt You and What They Did**

- Denial is not forgiveness. Example: "Yes, my father broke my nose when I was a teen, but he was drunk and didn't know what he was doing." "Yes, my brother raped me when I was ten years old, but he was just a boy." Minimizing their sin is not really honest and is not helpful.
- "Time heals all wounds" is not true. Forgiveness and God's grace heals our wounds.
- "Forgive and forget" is not scriptural. We must forgive, but it is impossible to erase our memory. Forgiveness takes the pain and fear out of a memory. Example: Myra said to her pastor: "I just can't do what the people in church tell me to do. They tell me I have to forgive and forget what my ex-husband did to me and our children, but I can't do it." The pastor responds: "Myra, the people in church are mistaken if they are telling you that you must forget something awful. We can't erase our memories, especially painful, traumatic memories. The Lord tells us we must forgive, but he never tells us to forget. But he will help you to forgive so you will not be tormented by the memories."

### **2. Express Your Feelings of Hurt and Anger, Grief and Loss**

- Anger is not a sin. *Jesus looked at them with anger* (Mark 3:5) but he did not sin. *Be angry but sin not, and don't let the sun go down on your anger:* (Eph. 4:26)
- If you try to hold your anger in without expressing it, you will either blow up or clam up, explode or implode. Example: People going through a divorce where there is a lot of bitterness, blaming, arguing, and cursing regularly experience high blood pressure, migraines, back pain, and all kinds of sickness.
- You must express your honest feelings, but don't express them on Facebook or to your sister, express your feelings only to God and to another appropriate, confidential person.

### **3. Cancel the Debt**

- Say, "I cancel the debt. He doesn't owe me an explanation or an apology or anything." Excuse them. Release and unchain them.
- Renounce anger and resentment. Surrender the wish to punish and the desire for God to punish them. Some people say, "I forgive, but I hope he burns in hell!" Jesus said, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*
- Determine not to speak evil against them. *Do not speak evil of one another, brethren, or you become a judge of*

*God's law.* (James 4:11)

- We cannot ultimately pardon or cancel anyone's sins or debts to God. Only God can do that. But we can and must be obedient to our Lord who was absolutely insistent that we must forgive others.

#### **4. Consider Reconciliation**

- Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. You can't demand an apology. You can't demand that other people change. All you can do is forgive and pray for God to change their hearts. Forgiveness is unilateral, but it takes two to tango – and to affect a reconciliation. Go humbly in love, ask forgiveness for your sins, but don't expect or demand that they reciprocate;
- There are some abusive people that you should not be around or permit your children to be around until they drastically change. Even then they should be monitored when around your children.
- If you prayerfully decide to try for reconciliation, you need to prepare yourself for the possibility of rejection.
- Example: Jill was the black sheep in her family. She had two older sisters, and they were the righteous sisters in the eyes of Mother and Father, while Jill was the bad egg and everything was her fault. Under all the pressure and rejection, while in high school she turned to a bad group - - which confirmed her family's judgment of her. She ran away from home when she was 17. Years passed, Jill was found by the Lord and her life changed. She married a Christian man, had two children, and forgave her parents and sisters. She wanted to be reconciled with them. But when she phoned them, they hung up on her. When she wrote them, her letters were returned unopened. What can she do? She can continue to love them, forgive them and perhaps reach out to them after a period of time. But she cannot demand reconciliation. That is up to them.

#### **5. Protect Yourself. Establish Boundaries.**

- Jesus said time and again that we must forgive others, but he also taught that there were steps we should do in certain circumstances. Jesus' teaching about turning the other cheek is not a universal rule for all circumstances. We are to be led by the Spirit and by the Word of God. In Matthew 18:15-17 he said that when your brother sins against you that you are to take steps to affect a change in his attitude so that there can be reconciliation. Please study that section of Scripture.
- Please see my teaching on [Establishing Boundaries](#) in my website, [glennbrownministries.com](http://glennbrownministries.com), or read the classic book by the name, [Boundaries](#), by Cloud and Townsend.
- About forty percent of the people in an average congregation admit that they have had problems since becoming adults with a dominating father or mother or both. It is not Christian doctrine that people must continue to allow a dominating parent to control and mess up their life forever. Not!
- Example: A young couple with two young children came to talk to me after an evening church service in Mexico. They said they had big problems with the wife's father. They said that he had been controlling their lives and marriage from the beginning, that he told them how to spend their money, what church to attend, how to raise and discipline their children, etc. I said to them that they must go and sit down with Dad and explain to him that they were not going to allow him to control them that way any more. They pulled back with a fearful look on their faces and said, "Oh, but he is very strong! He would explode if we did that." I said, "That is his problem. Your problem is that you have been afraid of him and haven't stood up to him and declared your independence." (I know this is extremely difficult and fearful when someone has been raised in a situation of control and domination, and I share it very lovingly.) "You can't just pray and expect God to do this for you, you must pray for courage and love and do this difficult thing yourself or you will never be free. Yes, he will be furious and will ostracize you for a time, but in due course you can achieve an adult, respectful relationship with him. Hopefully." (Nothing is guaranteed since it takes two to tango.
- I have ministered to many wives, and a few husbands, who were being abused by their spouses, sometimes in terrible ways. This is definitely not God's will, and a pastor who tells a wife that she must forever submit to emotional, physical or sexual abuse because "God hates divorce" has never really studied the Scripture or understood the heart of God. Please don't misunderstand and think that I am in favor of easy divorce. God does hate divorce because of what divorce does to a family, especially to the children. But God doesn't hate people who separate if that is the alternative to living with such abuse that it is destroying them. Please see my teaching. [Wife Abuse](#), in my website.

This subject of forgiveness is huge and central for Christians. Please give it fresh consideration and prayer. God loves us so much, and his desire is to bless, heal, and liberate, and he cannot do that if we live in unforgiveness.

## PRISON MINISTRY

I had the opportunity of ministering in the prison at Delta last Friday afternoon and all day Saturday. About 30 guys participated. It is quite amazing that God has given me so much love for those guys, and of course you reap what you sow so most of them show a lot of love for me.

I shared or taught on the following:

My testimony – (How as a pastor I backslid into alcohol, pornography, and anger at my wife, and how God graciously rescued me through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and by delivering me from a passel of demons. Oh, boy!) - Teaching on Unforgiveness including Five Steps of Forgiveness as shown above - - the Heart (*Out of the heart come the issues of life*) - - Overcoming Self Hatred and Self-Condensation - - Traumas (how traumatic experiences open the door to emotional and physical problems, think of PTSD) - - Strongholds - - the Occult and Witchcraft - - the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

God graciously brought physical healing to six or seven guys, one man had suffered with pain in his back for 20 years. Wow! Thank you, Lord! I don't know for sure, but I believe a number of guys were transformed and it will have a powerful effect on them and their families. I will find out the details at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

God Bless

Glenn

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